

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for checking for patient information in a data stream in a medical records system comprising:
 - transferring the data stream in the medical records system;
 - extracting a portion of alphabet data from the data stream;
 - automatically comparing the portion of alphabet data with a predetermined sequence in a database;
 - automatically determining whether the portion of alphabet data comprises patient information based on the comparison; and
 - modifying the portion of alphabet data if it comprises patient information so that the modified portion of the alphabet data is independent of the patient information.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein transferring the data stream in the medical records system comprises generating a report comprising the data stream.
3. (Original) The method claim 1, wherein transferring the data stream in the medical records system comprises inputting the data stream into the medical records system.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein transferring the data stream in the medical records system comprises sending the data stream to a peripheral device.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein extracting a portion of alphabet data from the data stream comprises parsing the data stream.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein automatically comparing the portion of alphabet data with a predetermined sequence in a database comprises automatically comparing the portion of alphabet data with a predetermined format.
7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein automatically comparing the portion of alphabet data with a predetermined sequence in a database and determining whether the portion of alphabet data comprises patient information based on the comparison comprises using rules to specify a sequence of alphabet characters that includes patient information.
8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the rules comprise an expert system.
9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising notifying a user of the portion of alphabet data which comprises patient information and suggesting options to modify the portion of alphabet data which comprises patient information, and
wherein modifying the portion of alphabet data comprises manually selecting one of the options to modify the portion of alphabet data.
10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein modifying the portion of alphabet data comprises modifying content of the portion of alphabet data.
- 11.-12. (Canceled)
13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the patient information is selected from the group consisting of name, postal address, e-mail address, telephone number, social security number, and birthday.
- 14.-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A computer-based system for monitoring patient information in a medical records system, said computer-based system comprising:

a transfer device for transferring a data stream in the medical records system;

a memory storing predetermined sequences of patient information; and

a processor being coupled to the memory and the transfer device, the processor comparing an alphabet portion of the data stream with at least one predetermined sequence in the memory, determining whether the alphabet portion of the data stream comprises patient information based on the comparison, and modifying the alphabet portion of the data stream so that the modified alphabet portion of the data stream is independent of the patient information if the alphabet portion of the data stream comprises patient information.

20. (Original) The computer-based system of claim 19, wherein the transfer device comprises an input device.

21. (Original) The computer-based system of claim 19, wherein the data stream comprises a generated report; and

wherein the transfer device comprises an output device.

22. (Currently Amended) The computer-based system of claim 19, wherein the memory further comprises rules; and

wherein the processor comparing an alphabet portion of data with at least one predetermined sequence in the memory and determining whether the alphabet portion of the data stream comprises patient information based on the comparison comprises using the rules to specify a sequence of alphabet characters that includes patient information.

23.-25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) The computer-based system of claim 19, wherein the processor notifies a user of the alphabet portions of the data stream comprising patient

information and suggesting alternatives for the alphabet portions of the data stream comprising patient information.

27. (Currently Amended) A computer-based system for monitoring patient information in a medical records system, said computer-based system comprising:

a transfer device for transferring a data stream in the medical records system;
a memory storing predetermined sequences of patient information; and
a processor being coupled to the memory and the transfer device, the processor determining at least one characteristic of the data stream, determining whether an alphabet portion of data stream comprises patient information based on the characteristic, and modifying the alphabet portion of data stream if it comprises patient information so that the modified alphabet portion of the data stream is independent of the patient information.

28. (Original) The computer-based system of 27, wherein the characteristic comprises whether the data stream is a particular form.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the alphabet portion of data comprises a first number of alphabet characters; and

wherein modifying the alphabet portion of data comprises replacing the alphabet portion of the data with a second number of replacement characters, the second number being selected independent of the first number, the replacement characters being selected ~~[[data]] independent of the patient information~~ alphabet characters.

30-31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein modifying the alphabet portion of data comprises deleting the alphabet portion of the data.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Currently Amended) The computer-based system of claim 19, wherein the alphabet portion of data comprises a first number of alphabet characters; and
wherein modifying the alphabet portion of data comprises replacing the alphabet portion of the data with a second number of replacement characters, the second number being selected independent of the first number, the replacement characters being selected ~~[[data]] independent of the patient information~~ alphabet characters.

35. (Currently Amended) The computer-based system of claim 19, wherein modifying the alphabet portion of the data stream comprises deleting the alphabet portion of the data stream.

36. (Currently Amended) The computer-based system of claim 27, wherein the alphabet portion of data comprises a first number of alphabet characters; and
wherein modifying the alphabet portion of data comprises replacing the alphabet portion of the data with a second number of replacement characters, the second number being selected independent of the first number, the replacement characters being selected ~~[[data]] independent of the patient information~~ alphabet characters.

37. (Currently Amended) The computer-based system of claim 27, wherein modifying the alphabet portion of the data stream comprises deleting the alphabet portion of the data stream.

38. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein the second number of replacement characters comprises a predetermined number.

39. (New) The computer-based system of claim 34, wherein the second number of replacement characters comprises a predetermined number.

40. (New) The computer-based system of claim 36, wherein the second number of replacement characters comprises a predetermined number.